

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 LONDON 03825 261859Z

62

ACTION SS-20

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SPC-03

PM-07 NSC-07 OMB-01 H-03 L-03 DRC-01 /132 W

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R 261842Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9052

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

CINCUSNAVEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 03825

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, EG, UK, US

SUBJECT: PUBLICITY FOR NIMBUS STAR EXERCISE

REF: STATE 55515; CAIRO 1498 AND 1521

SUMMARY: BRITISH POINT TO RISING PRESS INTEREST AND WOULD LIKE TO COORDINATE WITH US. WE ARE HOLDING THEM OFF AT LEAST UNTIL FORMAL APPROVAL ON USE OF AKROTIRI HAS BEEN GIVEN. HOWEVER, WE AGREE THAT PRESS INTEREST IS LIKELY TO BUILD UP FAST. IT WOULD HELP TO HAVE LARGER POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR COORDINATION SPEEDILY CONCLUDED SO THAT FOCUS COULD SHIFT TO THE TECHNICAL OPERATION ITSELF. END SUMMARY.

1. FCO EGYPTIAN DESK OFFICER NIXON HAS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN UK COORDINATING PRESS LINE WITH US BEFORE LONG, POINTING OUT THAT PRESS INTEREST IS STRONG AND GROWING. WE HAVE INDICATED THAT GUIDELINES ARE PRESENTLY BEING WORKED OUT WITHIN USG. WE HAVE ALSO POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT THIS MATTER (AS WELL AS FORMAL COORDINATION OF US AND UK POSITIONS ON FORMAL AGREEMENTS TO BE MADE WITH EGYPTIAN GOVERNMENT, IN WHICH NIXON INDICATED BRITISH ARE ALSO INTERESTED) IS LIKELY TO BE DELAYED WHILE WE AWAIT FORMAL BRITISH APPROVAL TO USE AKROTIRI.

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PAGE 02 LONDON 03825 261859Z

(HE ASSURED THAT IS MOVING ALONG, THOUGH IT MAY TAKE

UNTIL THE END OF THIS WEEK.)

2. NIXON ALSO FILLED US IN GENERALLY ON INSTRUCTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN SENT TO WASHINGTON FOR DISCUSSION OF TECHNICAL LEGALITIES RELATING TO PROPOSED AGREEMENTS ON CLAIMS, JURISDICTION, AND RELIEF OF DUTIES.

3. AT SAME TIME, WE HAVE BEEN APPROACHED BY WRITER FOR "ECONOMIST" WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO EMBASSY WHO HAD PUT TOGETHER LARGE PARTS OF STORY FOR APPEARANCE IN NEXT ISSUE BUT WANTED US VIEWS. ON BACKGROUND, WE HAVE GIVEN HIM BARE OUTLINES OF STORY AND NO RPT NO TECHNICAL DETAILS. WE THINK WE QUELCHED RUMORS HE HAD PICKED UP OF POSSIBLE IRRITATION IN US-UK TALKS SO FAR AND ASSURED HIM WE WOULD LET HIM (AND OTHERS) HAVE MORE DETAILS IN DUE COURSE. HE IS ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN OUR ESTIMATES OF HOW LONG CLEARANCE OPERATION MIGHT LAST.

4. COMMENT: WE AGREE WITH CAIRO (AND BRITISH FCO) THAT PRESS INTEREST IS LIKELY TO GET VERY STRONG VERY SOON. AS DEPARTMENT PRESUMABLY AWARE, BRITISH HAVE MADE POLICY DECISIONS AND TURNED OPERATION OVER TO LOWER WORKING LEVELS OF FCO, AS WELL AS TO ROYAL NAVY. THESE PEOPLE ARE ANXIOUS TO GET ON WITH THE JOB AND CHAFE AT DELAYS. WE ARE TRYING TO ASSURE THAT SUCH CHAFING DOES NOT APPEAR IN THE PRESS AS DISSATISFACTION. IT WOULD HELP TO HAVE SPEEDY CONCLUSION OF US-UK-EGYPTIAN POLICY FRAMEWORK UNDER WHICH OPERATIONS COULD PROCEED, THUS SHIFTING PRESS FOCUS TO MORE USEFUL AVENUES.  
SOHM

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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